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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
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INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE
ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/13/2017

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS MINISTER

REF: CAIRO 1097

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR FRANCIS J. RICCIARDONE,
FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: IN A MAY 10 MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR, MINISTER OF STATE FOR LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS MUFEED SHEHAB NOTED THAT THE GOE PLANS TO MOVE FORWARD ON REVISING THE CURRENT CHILDREN'S LAW TO INCLUDE TOUGH NEW ANTI-TRAFFICKING PROVISIONS. SHEHAB WELCOMED CONSULTING WITH THE EMBASSY'S NEW JUDICIAL ATTACH ON EGYPT'S DRAFT ANTI-TERROR LAW. ON POLITICAL REFORM, SHEHAB INSISTED THAT EGYPT IS MOVING FORWARD. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) AMBASSADOR CALLED ON MINISTER OF STATE FOR LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS MUFEED SHEHAB MAY 10 TO INTRODUCE EMBASSY'S NEW JUSTICE ATTACH AS A NEW RESOURCE FOR U.S.-EGYPTIAN CONSULTATIONS IN ALL AREAS OF THE RULE OF LAW, FROM LEGISLATION TO IMPLEMENTATION, ON THE FULL RANGE OF ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST, INCLUDING IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS AND THE DRAFT ANTI-TERRORISM LAW. SHEHAB, WHO IS CHAIR OF THE GOE'S DRAFTING COMMITTEE FOR THE ANTI-TERROR LAW, NOTED THAT TWENTY ARTICLES OF THE LAW HAVE BEEN COMPLETED TO DATE, "AFTER CAREFUL STUDY OF THE PATRIOT ACT, BRITISH CT LEGISLATION, AND OTHER RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL LAWS." HE ASSERTED THAT THE ANTI-TERROR LAW WILL BE VOTED ON DURING THE NEXT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT (DUE TO COMMENCE IN MID-NOVEMBER). SHEHAB SAID THAT IT WOULD BE "VERY USEFUL" TO CONSULT WITH THE EMBASSY'S NEW JUDICIAL ATTACH ON THE DRAFT ANTI-TERROR LAW. HE REQUESTED AN EARLY MEETING WITH THE JUDICIAL ATTACH AND OTHER COLLEAGUES OF SHEHAB WHO ARE WORKING ON THE DRAFT LAW, TO DISCUSS THE DEFINITION OF TERRORISM, AND UNDERTAKE A COMPARATIVE STUDY WITH U.S. CT LEGISLATION.

¶3. (C) AFTER THE AMBASSADOR STRESSED THE NECESSITY OF GOE ACTION IN COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS, SHEHAB SAID THAT HE HAD RECENTLY BEEN APPROACHED BY PM AHMED NAZIF, WHO REPORTEDLY HAD HOPED THAT A REVISION OF THE 1996 CHILDREN'S LAW (WHICH IS REPORTED TO CONTAIN TOUGH NEW ANTI-TRAFFICKING ARTICLES COVERING MINORS) COULD BE PASSED BY PARLIAMENT BEFORE THE END OF ITS CURRENT SESSION IN JULY (DETAILS ON THE PROPOSED REVISIONS REPORTED REFTEL). SHEHAB ASSERTED THAT THERE IS NO TIME TO PASS THE REVISED CHILDREN'S LAW IN THE CURRENT PARLIAMENTARY SESSION, BUT THAT THE PROCESS COULD BE STARTED (I.E. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION, CABINET APPROVAL, PRESENTATION TO THE PARLIAMENT FOR REVIEW AND STUDY) DURING THE CURRENT SESSION, AND THE ACTUAL LAW PASSED IN THE NEXT SESSION. HE SAID THAT HE IS IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH MOUSHIRA KHATTAB, CHAIR OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CHILDHOOD AND MOTHERHOOD, AND A MAJOR PROPONENT OF THE REVISIONS TO THE CHILDRENS LAW. SHEHAB AGREED WITH THE AMBASSADOR THAT, PENDING SUCH LEGISLATION, A PRIME MINISTERIAL DECREE FORMING AN INTER-MINISTERIAL COORDINATING BODY ON TIP IS OVERDUE, AND

PROMISED TO PUSH THE PM TO APPROVE THE MEASURE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

¶4. (C) ON POLITICAL REFORM, SHEHAB NOTED THAT HE IS "OPTIMISTIC WITH REGARD TO EGYPT PROGRESSING ... WE ARE MOVING FORWARD EACH YEAR, WITH MORE FREEDOMS AND OPPORTUNITIES, AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE RULE OF LAW." OPINING THAT "THERE HAS BEEN LESS POLITICAL IMPROVEMENT THAN WE HAD HOPED DUE TO THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES THAT PLAGUE THIS COUNTRY," SHEHAB SAID, "THUS, THE EGYPTIAN POPULATION IS NOT READY TO JUMP IMMEDIATELY INTO WESTERN-STYLE DEMOCRACY. BUT WE ARE MOVING FORWARD A FEW STEPS EACH YEAR."

RICCIARDONE